

a plurality of third dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a respective third rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a fourth rod that is disposed generally transverse to the respective third rod; and

10 a plurality of fourth dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a respective fourth rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a fifth rod.

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8. The fixture recited in Claim 7 further comprising a plurality of fifth dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to the fifth rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a sixth rod.

9. The fixture recited in Claim 1 wherein a plurality of first dual axis clamps are securable to a base and wherein the fixture further comprises a plurality of fifth dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to the fifth rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a sixth rod, and wherein the sixth rods support the fifth rod at different
5 positions above the base.

11. A universal holding fixture for holding an object, comprising:
a base; and

an articulated structure secured to the base that comprises a plurality of dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to at least one rod, which rod and clamps are
5 rotatable, slidable and lockable relative to each other to position the rod at varying and arbitrary angles, and wherein ends of selected ones of the rods are suitably positioned and secured to hold the object.

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12. The fixture recited in Claim 11 wherein a fixed rod is secured to the base and the articulated structure comprises eight dual axis clamps that are rotatable, slidable and lockable to six rods.

13. The fixture recited in Claim 12 further comprising two additional rods that are rotatable, slidable and lockable to a selected one of the six rods by way of two additional dual axis clamps.

14. The fixture recited in Claim 11 wherein the articulated structure comprises:
a plurality of first dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a fixed rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a second transverse rod;
a plurality of second dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a
5 respective second rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a third rod that is disposed generally transverse to the respective second rod;

a plurality of third dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a respective third rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a fourth rod that is disposed generally transverse to the respective third rod; and

10 a plurality of fourth dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a respective fourth rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a fifth rod.

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15. The fixture recited in Claim 14 further comprising a plurality of fifth dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to the fifth rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a sixth rod.

17. A universal holding fixture for holding an object, comprising:

a base; and

an articulated structure rotatably secured to the base that comprises:

a plurality of first dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a

5 fixed rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a second transverse rod;

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a plurality of second dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a respective second rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a third rod that is disposed generally transverse to the respective second rod;

10 a plurality of third dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a respective third rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a fourth rod that is disposed generally transverse to the respective third rod; and

a plurality of fourth dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a respective fourth rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a fifth rod.

18. The fixture recited in Claim 17 further comprising a plurality of fifth dual axis clamps that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to the fifth rod and that are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to a sixth rod.

REMARKS

Regarding the status of the present application, Claims 1, 3, 5-9, 11-15, 17 and 18 have been amended, and Claims 1-19 are pending in this application. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. The following remarks are in response to the Examiner's position stated in the Office Action mailed November 5, 2002.

Claims 1-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 3,987,579 issued to Palenik, III. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's rejection is in error. The teachings of the Palenik, III patent were generally discussed in the previous response. The pending Claims have been amended to recite that the dual axis clamps are each rotatable, slidable and lockable to two rods to form an articulated structure. It is respectfully submitted that the fact that the clamps are defined as lockable instead of securable clearly